

**Rise and fall of Great Powers: Comparative Study of UK and USA**

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and that it contains no materials previously published. I have not used its materials for the award of any kind and any other degree. Where other authors' sources of information have been used, they have been acknowledged.

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Date: May, 2019

## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

I certify that this dissertation titled “Rise and fall of great powers: Comparative study of UK and USA” was prepared by RAKSHYA DHAKAL under my supervision. I hereby recommend this dissertation for final examination by the Research Committee, Department of International Relations and Diplomacy, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER’S IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND DIPLOMACY.

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Assistant Professor Apekshya Shah,  
Supervisor

Date: January, 2020

## **LETTER OF APPROVAL**

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## ABSTRACT

The research is based upon the global affairs of various time periods to establish the superpower of the world during the various time period of global history. The study paper reveals that the superpower in the past was largely based upon the mere muscle power, suppression, colonization and exploitation whereas the modern superpower is all about global allies, cooperation, organization, trade and economics alongside the muscle power. In the past while England assumed the superpower it was like the big boss whom the rest of the world bowed and paid tax contributing towards the massive British economy while in the present context since the post second world war period after the USA assumed the superpower it is all about the cooperation, diplomatic relation, trade, commerce, economy, GDP and also the nuclear programs. While England acted as the big boss assuming superpower USA did it like a guardian or say a big brother in more cooperative approach. The USA is able to hold on to the superpower for so long because of its multi-dimensional and multi-functional approach in the modern technologically advanced era. The world has seen the likes of Germany, Japan, Russia or say China in the current context who has the massive military power like the USA but none were a serious threat to the crown because of the USA's superior approach. USA has not only attained the superpower nature but had appropriate approach to hold on to it in the modern competitive era. So the research paper presents the circumstantial evidences regarding the superior approach displayed by USA in the field of nuclear program, diplomatic affairs, global trade and countering evils like terrorism to hold on the superpower of the world like a pathfinder and guardian towards the improved human civilization globally.

**Key words:** Superpower, Global cooperation, Allies, military power, economic power.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS**

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Area
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GVC	Global Value Chain
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INF	Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Association
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRC	People's Republic of China
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitations Talk
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
TNC	Transnational Cooperation

UN	United Nations
USMCA	United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republic
WTO	World Trade Organization
WW	World War

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Rise and fall of global powers is a topic that comprises a large spectrum of activities carried out by various tiny nations in the middle age and activities or say conduction phenomenon of modern-day superpowers.

The world always had a superpower country which led from the front on overall development of human civilization throughout the history and that holds true even in the current modern period. Determining superpower though in itself a hypothetical concern, was pretty easy in the past while has become complex and multi-dimensional prospect in modern era as we entered the age of information technology.

This paper reflects the aspects of rise and fall of superpower in the past and gradual paradigm shift over time to different aspects and players. This paper takes account into the facts from historic era while the United Kingdom (UK) was in power and considered the undisputed superpower of the world as it had colonized major parts of globe with only a handful of other European rivals like France, Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Germany, Russia etc. It has discussed about the facts how the Englishmen were able to colonize African continent, India in Asia and American lands with abundance of natural resources also how it capitalized and exploit the immense human resources from Africa as well as India and other parts of the world. It has also mentioned how they British were able to overcome Chinese threat during so called opium war.

Likewise, the crown of UK superpower came into threat from the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century which propelled new players of the game like Japan, USA, Germany,

USSR alongside other established giants as 20<sup>th</sup> century marking the age of technological development.

As the first world war unfolded though English were not the leader of the war or the main player the muscle flexing of other giants like USA, Germany, Japan, Russia etc., compelled the UK out of superpower throne though the England was still the largest colonial power. Subsequently, USA nuclear bombing of Japan during the second world war changed the world order entirely which saw the USA as the emergence of undisputed superpower of the world. USA boasting the largest economy in world and possessing immense nuclear power compelled the entire globe to bow down at the newest superpower in world in the aftermath of second world war, recognition the USA still enjoys though with more and more intense completion with the turn of new millennium.

In the post second world period it was then USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republic) was the only entity that had provided any sort of competition to the USA. The cold war between the two giants was so severe that the rest of the world was always compelled to bear the fear about unforeseen devastating consequences if two nuclear power collided. Though both the countries during later stages of their cold war signed the denuclearization pacts and destroyed a significant amount of weapons of mass destruction still held immense nuclear warheads for the woe of entire world. Nevertheless, downfall of USSR during the early 1990s due to economic crisis again had USA as an undisputed superpower of the world again.

But with turn of the century which saw the development of information technology provided opportunities to entire world so to the technological and economically sound countries to rise their subsequent global reach in order to enhance their global stake. Now though the USA still considered the superpower of the world

the underdog rival in the form of China which is enjoying an unprecedented growth in their GDP and spreading their trade wings in the whole world is said to be the newest and the most formidable competitor to the USA throne of superpower. In the current age of information technology, the possession of warheads only can't be detrimental of superpower of the world. The global influence in trade, stake in the global organizations, stake in the global economy, global allies, technological advancement, among others are now considered to determine the superpower nature of the country. Though in all measures USA still considered to be the superpower has its competitors in different fronts in various forms. USA still the superpower, many observers believe, does not enjoy the amount privilege as it used to receive before the turn of 21<sup>st</sup> century.

So this paper analyzes that though USA still is undoubtedly the superpower of the world the China has provided a due competition to USA giving them run for their money in the form of global trade. In the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century USA also had a tough time against global terrorism mainly due to September 11 mishap. Thus this studies tries to analyze every pros and cons of USA still being the superpower of the world but it has immense competition in the present context to hold on the superpower status undisputedly.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

As the topic rise and fall of great powers itself is largely based upon assumptions it is very difficult to specify the degree of great power and the time frame to the regard. As the assumptions of relative military power, economic and political soundness are the necessary attributes for any country to assume great power, there is no specific yardstick to measure the same.

For example, a country may have sound economic status and political stability at the same time may not deem necessary to have excess military hardware or force like Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Luxemburg and so on. Likewise, there are a list of countries that seem to invest excess amount in nuclear weapon than their economy actually allows them to, countries like, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Ukraine and so on. In recent time even the USA is alleged to have spent more in military budget than it actually should have.

So a country is assumed to have great power when it possesses a good amount of military power capable of influencing in any emergency condition globally and at the same time is backed up by a good share in global economy and also need to have global political influence with handful of allies backing up in modern context. During the supremacy of British power, Britain was capable of influencing global condition with the large share of global economy. However, the changing dynamics of world politics has influenced the supremacy of power in international arena.

In such a scenario it is assumed that USA have all the influencing characteristics to be assumed to be a global power house with China not so far behind. As both the country enjoys permanent membership of United Nation (UN) security council and have a large arsenal backed up by big shares in global economy. The US seem to have edge over China in case of global allies whereas China is also taking its giant stride forward with expansion of its global trade worldwide. And countries Like India, Malaysia, Brazil , Thailand , Taiwan and array of Arabic countries have also joined the race of attaining global power with countries like Japan, Germany, France, England etc. being in the race since a long time.

In a given scenario it is very difficult to categories or list the contender countries in any specific order, the whole topic or phenomenon is totally base on

assumption of relative degree of global influence the particular country can have. In the present context the US is assumed to be the most influential country which can change in any given period of time as the global dynamics may take turn any time given the unpredictable nature of modern times.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

This research tends to identify three major questions revolving around the periphery of rise and fall. Firstly, it tries to explain the trend of rise and fall of British Empire. Secondly this paper has taken the super power in the 19<sup>th</sup> century UK and present superpower USA to compare it in the context of rise and fall. Lastly with the changing time period it explores the rising components of USA as a great power.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

This paper tries to explore the trend of rise and fall of British Empire. Its major objective is to compare the UK and USA in the context of rise and fall of great powers and also tries to portray the determining factors of the rise of USA as a superpower.

### **1.5 Delimitation**

This research is trying to measure the global influential to determine the global power but it is very difficult on determining the adverse effect of terrorism influencing the global supremacy.

This research will be limited to the global presence and rise and fall of Britain and the rise of US. Particularly the presence of the Britain as a global power will be studied from World War I and World War II. The study is mainly based on the published and unpublished secondary data.

## **1.6 Outline of the study**

This thesis is compiled of seven major chapters starting with introduction. It has applied qualitative method and used secondary sources of data like journals, books, articles and its data are based on comparative analysis. Introduction part highlights the trend of rise and fall of UK and rise of USA. Literature review basically includes the concept of power, rise and fall of great powers and emphasizes on theoretical perspective from realist and hegemonic stability theory. It elaborately discusses on rise and fall of British during the 19<sup>th</sup> century starting with industrial revolution to first world war. Further it discusses on the rise of USA after WWII, and the world order post-cold war and how the yardsticks of being a superpower drastically changed from colonization to cooperation. It consists of brief comparison of both the superpowers in terms of rise and fall. Lastly conclusion focuses on how the world is changing, the rise of countries like China has brought uncertainty in the superpower status. Also the concept of superpower is fading and the world is shifting towards multipolarity.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Power in International Relations**

A country having strong hold on military, diplomatic, cultural and economic spheres might be coined as a powerful state. In international relations the concept of power keeps on changing with time. States coping up with the changing dynamics will rise or maintain its position and those states that cannot keep up with the change, declines. However, there is no exact definition of power it keeps on changing in regards to time. In *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers*, Paul Kennedy discusses at length the development of modern, powerful states and how they can decline or collapse altogether. Yet despite his extensive research on the power of some of the most influential states, there is no concrete definition of what it considers power to be, rather, pointing out at various resources how the changes of power among states occurs. But most of the scholars express the common determinants of power is considered to be military, economy and global influence in the present context.

Traditionally the states with the huge military power were designated 'Great Powers', and the fixture of international politics was played primarily by them (Spykman, 1942; Sprout and Sprout, 1945, 1962; Wight, 1946).

From eighteenth century to World war I, the power used to be defined by some fixed factors which are military and naval power, economic capacity as well as population and territory (Gulick, 1955, p. 24). UK was superpower in that era because it possessed supremacy in all these elements. In later years, according to Morgenthau, these elements were considered as the factors of national power (Morgenthau,1960).

In the modern landscape, power status has been defined in four categories. Basically they are superpower, great power, middle power and small power. William

T. R. Fox defined superpower as "great power plus great mobility or exercise of power" and mentioned three states to be powerful, the British Empire, the Soviet Union and the United States (Evans, Newnham, p.522). Superpower state can influence the overall international system with its wide range of scopes and domains like military, economy, culture, hold in the international organizations. These kinds of states play decisive role to determine and shape the international system. A "system-determining" state plays a critical role in shaping the system: The "imperial power" United Kingdom in a unipolar system during 19<sup>th</sup> century and the two Great Powers, USA and Soviet Union in a bipolar system are examples.

“Great Power can be defined a state which has the sole influence and its power in the international system (Keohane,1966). It is most decisive and has a huge control on the international system. Secondary power is a state whose leaders consider that alone it can exercise some impact, although never in itself decisive, on that system. However, it can play an influential role in the unilateral as well as multilateral platform. Middle power are those state which cannot make huge differences alone but may have a significant systemic impact if it is able to any international institutions or forums. These states exert important role by working in a small group, alliance or regional organizations. Lastly small power, a state whose leaders consider that it can never, act alone or in a small group, make a significant impact on the system.

## **Theoretical Perspectives**

### **Realist Perspective**

The realist perspective considers the nation-state as its fundamental unit as and deals with the complex interplay between them as they compete for dominance to establish themselves as a superpower. The superpower, according to this theory, is a

state with inherent capabilities to dominate the working of this systematic structure.

This theory encourages the emergence of a strongman, who fulfils all of the prerequisites to occupy the top spot in the world (Kocak,2006)

In the realist approach, state must enjoy “predominance of material resources and control over raw materials, sources of capital, markets, and competitive advantages in the production of highly valued goods” (Keohane, 1984, p.32).

From a modern historical perspective, Great Britain has been the undisputed superpower, from its dominant involvement in the Napoleonic war, thus wars lasting up to the first world war. It had a significant strategic worldwide influence politically, culturally, financially and defensively, while still espousing the concepts of free trade. Post Second World War the United States bagged the hegemonic or superpower and has been performing as a source of a stable international political and economic order by means of provision of ‘collective goods’ in economics, security and international organizations.

Realism is the most relevant theory in studying the changes of superpower in international system. Thus, the realist concept of “structural power” lends to the fact that for realists, a new and efficient state usually heralds the decline of an established superpower as it concedes its dominance to the new superpower.

Specifically, the realist variant of superpower contains one of the most comprehensive dimensions of analyzing the rise and decline of dominant actors in the international system. As per (Gilpin, 1975) attempt to compare the nineteenth century Pax-Britannica with the American ascendancy in the mid-twentieth century

The superpower is required to control and organize other actors in the world politics and also support for effective performance of the system. While studying the modern superpowers (The United States and Great Britain), their relations based on

geopolitical and economic relations as well as national interest; their ability to get smaller powers to agree to their agenda while ensuring wholehearted acceptance and mutual benefit is what made them effective global superpowers. In return of payment of revenue by people, they are given different rights like security and property rights (Gilpin, 1981 pp.144-145). In other words, it influences to perform number of activities to keep the system working efficiently.

Though the modern world has multiple dimensions for a particular country to be called a superpower, the realist, however consider the raw military power and sophisticated arsenal as the mainstay to head the international politics. The swinging dynamics of the modern era prompts to the distribution or shift of the superpower concept, the realistic view, whereas the liberal viewers do not focus much on the shift of power rather their approach is sort of continuation process of allies' development, expand global trade, technological development, philanthropic motives etc. considered detrimental alongside developing sophisticated arsenal. The realist further view that the issues like causes of war, the balance of power, the grand strategies are directly related to the changes in the distribution of power making the realistic view of superpower very definite and rigid (Schmidt and Roy, 2013).

Realistic view that the rising power is likely to supersede the existing international order by destabilizing the superpower from its throne but the liberals view that the rising power is likely to perform its global duties in tandem with the existing superpowers which is not deterred in a greater degree as the development process of the existing power also proceeds in its own cycle alongside the rising power. The phenomenon of relative progress also prompts the realist view also concerned about factors that contribute in differential power growth among nations.

That means the realist also view that there is relative progress among existing superpower country is also experienced considerably alongside the rising superpower.

### **Hegemonic Stability Theory**

There has always been a debate whether the American hegemonic position has deteriorated in the international arena since the 2008 or its structural power resources are still effective to sustain the bases of US hegemony in worldwide has given rise to the redefinition and reconceptualization of the role of hegemonic power in the global system. Kindleberger postulated the requirement of a leader in the global arena to create and uphold an international liberal economy; these arguments have often been used by political scientists to better explain the downfall of United states as a superpower

The wishes of Britain to maintain its global hegemony was greatly affected by the events in the first world war, after which it lacked economic prowess to bear the responsibility of doing so (Kindleberger, 1973). Furthermore, the United States, which had risen as the economic powerhouse, did not willingly establish itself as the hegemonic power in international trade and economy at that time (Gilpin, 1987, p.130).

Kindleberger further hypothesizes that there remains a need for “one stabilizer” to balance the world economy, which Great Britain represented, by maintaining the role of the hegemony facilitating the unrestricted flow of capital internationally, and by abetting the economic and political influence and growth of multinational corporations, which, as discussed earlier, was abruptly ended after the first world war. Hence, he provides evidence that the hegemony should adapt and foster the idea of international economic liberalism. This idea makes reasonable sense as the free flow of commodities and liberalization of international trade are most

beneficial for the regime (McKeown, 1983, p.74). To be precise the Superpower nation must have a large and growing economy, leading position in technological and financial sector and should be loaded with a military power for political projection around the globe.

Realism and liberalism remain the two cornerstones of the hegemonic theory. Although they remain two distinct entities, as described by Higgott, saying realists have a 'self-regarding' perspective and liberalists are 'other regarding' while conceptualizing the concept of a world superpower (Higgott, 1994, p.159). This approach of analyzing the elements of hegemony and connecting it with the geo-political and economic circumstances which enable international economic liberalization be very accurate, coherent and helpful to understand the rise and fall of hegemonic powers in the world. It also postulates that this rise and fall of hegemonic powers was key to structural changes in politics and economy throughout the world.

### **Rise and Fall**

Paul Kennedy's, "The Rise and Fall of Great Powers" observed that two characteristics: the rise and fall of a power's economic strength relative to its competitors on the global stage, and the corresponding rise and fall of its military power that follows, generally after the passage of sometime are closely linked. Superpower, in order to remain same, will have a task that is simple to understand but difficult to execute: to balance wealth and their economic base with their military power and strategic commitments. While Kennedy focused on military and economic supremacy as the elements of superpower, some scholars argue that other elements like alliances, soft power, networks, influence in international organizations and diplomatic capacity are the other elements of power in contemporary world politics.

Furthermore, Kennedy points out that the strength of great power can be measured in relative comparison of other powers. The real discussion here is, the way USA snatched the role as a superpower from Britain in the mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century due to over extension of Britain's colonies as it's absolute power was declining, does the future shift in relative economic power away from the USA. However, the historical analysis suggests that emergence, development and decline is inevitable in the world system, so it is easier to form the comparative analogies in the study of British and US declines. Since the 16th century there have occurred repeating cycles on the war, economic expansion and contraction, unipolarity, multipolarity and hegemonic transitions (Shannon, 1989, p.136). But the theory also has shown variations; such as capitalism, interstate system, economic zones nation-states, social classes and etc. This diversity provides a chance to tackle the concept of hegemony from many aspects. So the big debate in rise and fall today is whether the potential superpower China will surpass USA or not.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The focal point of this research is to analyze the strength of British, strength during the WWI and WWII period as were the main occupants of global land establishing themselves as a superpower.

Then it analyzes different battle during before and after Second World War and the nuclear war heads possessed by the USA and USSR during cold war, as during the period superpower was decided by the military strength which was weighed by the possession of nuclear war heads.

In order to analyze superpower of the countries in the modern area this research will focus mainly upon the global economic activities carried out by big players like the USA, China, England, France, Germany, Japan, alongside the emerging players like India, Malaysia, Brazil, comparatively alongside their military power.

Determining the superpower in the modern era it also analyzes the influence of various countries in the global organizations like UN, WTO, EU among others and also determine the allies and foes of different countries to weigh the superpower possessed by different countries in order to point out at superpower or superpowers in the modern context.

The methodology applied to this proposed research will be qualitative in nature.

#### **3.2 Data Collection Method**

The proposed research will be based on the secondary data collection including scholarly articles and writings related to the research subject; official



documents and official statements relating to rise and fall of US and UK be the dominant source of analysis.

### **3.3 Data Analysis**

The data analysis of the proposed research will be based on comparative analysis. It basically compares the determinants of super power then and now.

## CHAPTER 4

### RISE AND FALL OF BRITISH AS A SUPERPOWER

#### 4.1 Rise of British as a Superpower

The world has always been led by superpower country and rest following the very path laid down by the leader in order to further develop human civilization since the prehistoric period. At first it was the Dutch, the Holland and after it was the likes of Spain, Portugal, and France who were able to erect their flags to vast and scattered land on earth alongside England. Englishmen first conquered major parts of Europe and headed towards Africa. Africa was symbol of dominance for power striving European countries, were far ahead of rest of the world in the wake of overall human development, nevertheless, Europeans began evading Africa to announce global dominance on the other hand exploiting immense human and natural resources of the continent.

Britain got really serious about colonizing Africa during the 19th century. England in their quest to conquer globe started their endeavor in modern way by conquering the economy of the region rather than deploying brutal military power. In 1875, Britain possessed 44 percent share in Suez Canal (Niall, 2004). The motive of acquiring the share was solely to conquer Africa and utilize their immense human and natural resources revealing their global dominance (Jeessica, 2014).

British by using their military power had already started the supply of their immense human resources to the Caribbean islands and North American sub-continent yielding white population a large amount of money trading brutal power and strength of Black population during 18<sup>th</sup> century, which had already started backfiring tarnishing the image of white people. So the white Englishmen needed a new rather diplomatic way to step forward in the African continent in 19<sup>th</sup> century and the answer

to their problem was to capture the economy which had been rather the concrete way of colonizing the globe than evading the countries with military power following the historic period and stepping in the modern era in the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century. They were successful defeating the Dutch and other European giants, regarded as a milestone in the history of British global dominance and colonizing the natural resources rich South Africa.

Prior to this the European giants had already locked their hands to get hold of their territories in American continents, where there were battles mainly between Spain, France and England resulting in a treaty during 1763 dividing the land areas between the Europeans where English were allocating a fair bit more territory in comparison to other powerful countries. The treaty is widely known as the Paris Treaty (Marshall,1998). The treaty ensured the redistribution of certain areas like the areas of lower Canada, land up to Mississippi, Florida, India and Senegal were allotted to Britain while the British returned Cuba and Manila to the Spain as a part of the treaty. The world saw a global populace comprehend difference between exploitation and trade, slavery and democracy forcing the paradigm shift for powerful countries to establish themselves as a superpower (Lewthwaite, 1955).

The disputes between the powerful Europeans were spread whole over the world like different parts of India were under control of other European Giants. Like the port of Madras was under control of France, similarly Portuguese got hold of the western port of Goa and Bombay while the English has their control over the East coast line of Calcutta and Orissa. However, the clashes of titans were settled later as the whole Indian Territory was later handed over to British. As India had large amount of raw materials, it became the important source of Britain's power (Brown,1998).

Gradually, British understood that military and imperial power is not enough for them to rule the world, the major role is played by the economy. Business and economy would determine their power worldwide more permanently as it is the only tool that can yield prosperity to superpowers also ensuring due benefits to local populace out of their resources may it be human or natural.

While the global populace was being more literate power countries were vying for natural resources to grow economically worldwide. British had their eyes upon raw materials like cotton, indigo, jute, spices, sugar, tea, among others which India produced. These raw materials were shipped to Britain for use in British Factories which were turned into finished product and were shipped around the world mainly to the British colonies yielding higher profits. Thus, Britain became the first Industrial nation “starting with coal and steam engine to silk and other luxurious materials that was able to conceptualize the overall trade routes and import export all over the world” (Landow,2015).

British founded the East India Company with an initial capital of 70000 pounds. The company later built a fort in Madras in 1639, bought the island in Bombay from king Charles II and moved their factories in the island in 1687, and spent heavily in Calcutta to set it up as their Bengal capital in 1700 (Lloyd,1996). Subsequently East India Company slowly took control in India. The then Mughal Empire began to grow weaker and weaker the company was able to establish its root more firmly in the Indian subcontinent where they began gaining political and economic strength and started building its own military force. Since the beginning of 1700 till 1800 the company was able to fully take control over India and started exploiting every possible means to serve their own vested interest. The economy boomed as export of woolen clothes to Europe increased rapidly. Alongside British,

large quantities of silver and gold were exported to Europe by Spanish and Portuguese colonies in the new world which also contributed to increase money supply of England.

Among all the superpowers from Europe, British was in the highest position because of its trade benefit from India, and also gained larger benefits from West Indies and Africa from lucrative from commercial trade, sugar and slave. While the British earnings from Africa and West Indies were beginning to decline they were able to gain even higher from South Asian subcontinent allowing them to grow from strength to strength in all political, economic and military forms turning them into the most powerful nation leaving behind their arch rivals like Netherlands, Spain, Portugal or France far behind. In 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, British began to grow in multiple sectors (Kenneth,1984).

British export began soaring higher and higher, the export amounting 6.5 million pound in 1700 reached 14.7 million pound in 1760 and reached whopping 43.2 million pound in 1800. By 1800s only the Netherlands could provide any competition if there was any in terms of global trade to the British establishing the latter as undisputed superpower of the world. The British world system allowed huge growth in the trade creating paths for payment which led to increase of its economy (Legassick ,1989, p.390).

With the unprecedented growth in the trade the British were able to have economic strength which subsequently helped them to build powerful military forces with modern navy turning them into the only superpower of the world. Subsequently, British were able to rise influence over a large number of population worldwide through its extensive economic and political activities. The global coverage of British empire expanded covering almost 25 percent of global populace. The higher

population coverage globally compelled British government to perform mammoth economic activities making the British economy more and more tensed. So the British government decided to form companies in Egypt and South Africa to ease the tension of British economy through decentralization of economy. Later the companies in Egypt and South Africa started functioning in full-fledged contributing ultimately towards the British economy. Then the British well spread trade round the globe started functioning smoothly easing the high pressure sustained by British economy functioning without the division of task through decentralization. During the latter part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Britain let its huge provinces of Canada, Australia and New Zealand to act autonomously and have self-governance though the ultimate power was rested on to the Premier of England.

At the same time Britain also demonstrated its mighty military strength by defeating France in the Napoleonic war between two then great powers between 1804 to 1815. The decade long war was mainly fought on water showcasing the naval power they both possessed. Both the powerful countries had difference in their basic ideology. France always supported the concept of liberty and equity while British ere the pioneer of capitalism and industrialism (Lloyd, 1996). However, war between the mighty duo helped determine the superpower as Britain following their victory after a decade long war and Britain now claimed majority of land and major trade spots globally.

Likewise, Britain was also able to claim major trade port like Lintin Island known as Guangzhou in present following the popularly known opium war during early 1840s. The British well established in the Indian subcontinent wanted to expand its territory in China too. After their failed official approach, the British tried the crooked tactics of bribing the high Chinese officials and viceroy and supply the

opium, found and farmed in the Indian subcontinent in abundance, to the Chinese land and were successful. The opium started to gain popularity in China significantly and had unexpectedly a huge demand in China. However, Chinese started to question ethics behind such transaction held by British. Then in 1840 the Chinese confiscated 20000 boxes of opium worth 2 million pounds. British tried their best to take it back but were unable, so they bombarded Canton in 1841 and killed approximately 500 Chinese soldiers while there were no casualties in the British front. After the war British captured Lintin Island and other ports for the purpose of their trade facilitating them a very lucrative trade routes both water and land linking them to the northeast Asia and Europe.

Being a superpower Britain also triggered significant industrial development globally. They pioneered in the sector of banking, national finance and industrialization, among others, in order to lead the entire world as a superpower. Rapid increment of banking transactions from whooping £38 million in 1830, to £60 million in 1845 and £122 million by 1857 (Clapham, 1939, p.211, cited in Darwin,2011). England now considerably developed railways throughout the world in order to mobilize and transport their raw material needed for industries and finally carry the finished products to their possible consumers scattered globally. They established the very effective and lucrative railways network in the Indian peninsula by the name of East Indian railways. The railway network connecting the entire length of the India not only generated a huge amount of revenue but it also helped in the transportation of raw materials as well as commodities to their targeted market easily generating huge amount of earnings to the British government. Simultaneously they were also able to establish the railway in north and South America, which in fact was more lucrative market for their finished commodities. In North America they started

Canadian Pacific Railway and in the south they started Simon Bolivar in northern Venezuela. Similarly, they also commenced railway system in the African region too, mainly focusing in South Africa. Global network of railways became the main tool of British empire to flourish through smooth trade links globally. Railway was considered the backbone of British trade globally. Our steamboats and our miraculous railways are the advertisements and vouchers of our enlightened institutions (Halpern 1914, p. 2).

The mighty England started global dominance through military power and subsequently adjusted itself to be an effective trader as per the requirement of time. The very quality of England, its ability to change according to the need of time, later became its main trait to establish itself as a superpower nation of the world. There were other European countries which were as powerful as England militarily, but other powerful countries lacked the flexibility of England. Therefore, since the 17<sup>th</sup> century English was the most popular language of the world and English political and cultural system was the most popular growth oriented system and the array of nation under the British colonization were the most developed countries in the world.

England perhaps was able to do everything to be a superpower may it be the ethical way of trade, economic and political stunts, or the arrogant way of deploying military to overpower or may it be the most unethical way of slave trade or supply of opium, the British did it all to be there and be there for centuries.

#### **4.2 Fall of British as a Superpower**

Great Britain, followed massive economic growth in Britain up to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the trend began reversing towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with Britain and hence the world undergoing stagnancy and inflation and progressive shrinking of the economy, and the rebirth of a competition between



dominant countries to establish themselves as a new superpower post Britain (Weber, 1983, p.50 as cited in Kocak, 2006 ).

The tension between the titans of Europe, in visible form began to escalate in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The European giants like Germany were competing furiously in the field of military, alliances, imperialism and mainly technology. In order to demonstrate their respective superiority, countries started establishing this phenomenon as a yardstick to determine the superpower of the world.

However, the two giants British and Germany came face to face during the first world war triggered where Europe divided into two groups following the assassination of a Bosnian prince where England was joined by host of powerful nations like France, Italy, Russia, Romania, among others. While the German front was backed up by other powerful countries like Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Ottoman Empire, among others, though not considered as powerful as their opponents but the Germany itself had a wary of arsenal to combat their fiery opponents. Germany continued two policies – firstly it challenged Britain’s position in global level and secondly, it expanded itself in Europe to break the continental balance of 1815 (Calleo, 1987, p.133). This saying represents a succinct summary of one of the major factors laying the groundwork of the unstable geopolitical relations, which kindled the First world war.

Though England was victorious in the war but its superpower nature was experienced to have faded away significantly as it took almost six long years of war to overcome a nation. After all, that too only with the backup of a number of other powerful countries like Japan, America and Russia. England was considered to be in its prime in the wake of colonizing more than 25% of total land in the post first world war era it was deemed not to be the superpower of the world as the British had faced

the over expansion of its territory and the economy started to fade. Countries like America, Germany and Japan were way ahead in the field of industrialization and technology as compared to rest of the world while countries like Russia, France, were not lagging that far behind.

Huge upheaval in global conditions like the Wall Street ‘crash’ and the subsequent Great Depression led to a massive job crisis, decrease in commodity prices and a slowdown in international trade. Failure of capitalism heralded a crisis in liberalism as well. Now in survival mode, nations turned away from liberal policies and towards imperialism, fierce nationalism, autocracy and regime changes due to frequent rebellions. In this hostile situation, free trade and liberalism were mostly ignored or disliked. More specifically, the decline is caused directly by the economic strengthening of other core states (Wallerstein, 2002, p.360).

The increasing trend of trade protectionism, the rise of custom walls, tariff symbolized the changing nature of world economy where British couldn’t catch up like USA and Germany in the later part of 19<sup>th</sup> century did. With the use of high technology like electrical, chemical and light metal industry, USA surpassed the hegemonic status as it became difficult to Britain to restore supreme position in the capitalist world economy. Great uncertainty in the elements related with British economy and safety were visible. The uncertainty greatly affected British exporters leading to trade deficit. According to Siegfried, the major causes British decline are the loss of British foreign investments, unreasonable living standards and decline in industrial production. The countries like America, Russia, Japan, were ahead and the competition to the superpower throne seemed among them, including U.K as it was not completely diminished but not strong enough to stand alone as before.

Wealth and prosperity which were the major components of British power seemed to be diminished. Britain's industrial decline aggravated by growing competition among other powers (especially USA) for economic and political influence outside Europe, led to more aggressive search for markets. With the decline of profit in Europe, British showed in the extension of its market in Asia and Africa. In China the British government deliberately extended its formal and informal in 61 order to create new markets, or to save markets from absorption by competitors (Cain and Hopkins, 1980, p.485).

Furthermore, the nationalism catastrophe loomed over the world, and infected the British system. Churchill while addressing the Conservative Party's meeting in 1934 stated that other countries are ready to surpass British superpower position (Darwin, 2011). Europe was in the stage of over extension in territorial, commercial and demographic way in nineteen centuries. Thus the declination of the British order did not only give rise to intensifying political and economic competition, but also an intense struggle for infiltrating and obtaining fruitful markets in the colonial zones. British imperialism refers to the time period that created political control and creation of outlets through extraction of raw materials (Arrighi, 1999, p.223).

Now the new inventions through technology were more relevant on increasing the military power. Military strength largely being determined according to concerned country's navy power in the past now with the technological development was determined by the state of air force and possession of warheads including nuclear missiles since 1930s. Along with military, its economic foundation grew narrower and the industries were outdated and the British couldn't handle its colonial zone due to over imperial expansion. "The wave of nationalism had hit the its colonies, Britain

was ready in a position to effect a generally peaceful transfer of authority” (Truman, 1969, p. 697).

British also got setback in the hands of Germany and Japan before the 2nd world war as the Germans invaded Greece and Japan overpowered England in Singapore considered to be a main port of Asia. However, till the beginning of the Second World War it was clear that England was not the only big player in the global scenario. UK not only blew their money in the arms and ammunitions during second world war but the firing of great array of arsenal by the host of powerful European nations had lost a significant amount of fixed assets destroying the large amount of scattered property around Europe. Array of wealthy people in Europe had to abandon their properties and flea here and there mainly to the USA and few to Africa after the second world leaving Europe almost to a scratch.

Nevertheless, the focal point of Second World War was the USA bombing in Japan. The ruthless drop of nuclear war head for the first and only incident in the history of mankind took place while the USA fired two mean nuclear war heads little boy and fat man in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the devastating effect not only killing thousands of people but also paralyzing the whole surroundings and adversely affecting the whole environment. The drop of the two warheads was enough for the world to know what a devastation USA can cause with nuclear power head and not only Japan but entire globe kneeled down in front of the new undisputed superpower of the world the USA. In 1960, Harper noted two world wars are the factors that led to British decline. Shortage of manpower has forced to limit its military commitments outside Europe and the Mediterranean. England was hit by further setback 1947 as it lost its strong hold in Asia following the freedom of India, the land of tremendous resources and cheap manpower. After second world war England started leaving the

colonized country either responding to their fight for freedom or for economic reason as were not able to govern the wide spread land on earth after their economic downturn in the post second world war period.

To sum up, the result of fighting two World Wars in a very short amount of time, along with the emergence of the United States rise to superpower status after the end of World War II, which was hostile to British imperialism and along with the change in ideology led to a rapid wave of decolonization all over the world in the decades post World War II. Some key events in this journey of decline and subsequent loss of superpower status include the first world war and second world war, The Great depression, the Irish partition, the devaluation of the pound, the loss of former colony states including India, and the cessation of the Land-Lease aid from the United states. The ultimate deathblow to Britain as a superpower came with the Suez Crisis of 1956. Moreover, English were now truly superseded by USA as a superpower of the world in terms of its military and nuclear power as well the huge trade and economic activities of the later in the global scenario.

## CHAPTER V

### RISE OF USA AS A SUPERPOWER

#### 5.1 Period of World War I and II

While the USA was able to assume its superpower nature in the post second world war period, the tarnishing image of England was further hit hard as more and more colonized nation started their movements for democracy by sending back England hence attaining long overdue freedom. Such freedom fight was observed before the second world war and had great leverage and momentum following the war as whole Europe including England sustained a massive economic downturn in the post second world war scenario. As per Wallerstein, 1945 marks the beginning of USA's hegemony in global level (1996, p.215).

But it didn't happen at once USA emerged gradually with series of events that influenced the overall international system. During the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft the USA was concerned on gaining international power, particularly in Latin America and the pacific. The USA never became actively involved in the world conflict until Woodrow Wilson became President.

As event became more tense in Europe and first World War escalated in 1914, Wilson kept USA away from the war as he stated that American people should be impartial in their thoughts as well as their actions. But the Germans agents sabotaged American machinery, sunk the British ship that killed many Americans and started the submarine tensions despite of sending many notes of warning. So the USA entered the war in April 1917. Since USA entered the war late so it didn't have to bear much of the repercussions compared to the Europeans. Taxes were raised and liberty bonds were sold to meet the cost of war. War plants increased their output of war materials,

labor gave up their right to strike and increased output. Though the USA joined the war from the then superpower side England as late as 1917, the allies side got a tremendous boost just by the presence of the US in their side. The array of nations like Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria dropped their weapons and surrendered after the mighty US launched its troops around the French land. Then Germany also had to halt its evil proceeding by November 11, 1918 ending the war. The end of the world war was a loud announcement of the arrival of new superpower in the form of USA. The war was put towards an end, as it was the American military hardware, Wilson's diplomatic efforts to achieve "peace without victory", American navy technology which resulted in creating initiation of new collective security system. President Wilson outlined a plan for the post-war peace settlement in his famous "Fourteen Points" speech (or plan) to Congress. His intention was to create a stable post-war order that would rectify the failings of the pre-war system and prevent the outbreak of similar conflict ever again. Key opinions of the plan included open diplomacy, global reduction of armaments, a commitment to national self-determination and the creation of general association of nations capable of guaranteeing security.

In the aftermath of first world war the USA rapidly began to woo its economy, global trade as well global diplomacy to back off to its mighty military and technological advancement. Though there is no such yardstick to measure the superpower nature of any country it was loud and clear that the USA now was the most influential and powerful nation in the world with the backup of its tremendous economic and technological progress, the world had ever experienced. Now the USA was the big brother in the world and the world looked upon US for settlement of any global issue. The whole world was vying to be an ally to USA including the England with only some exception like Germany, Russia and Japan.

Forth more, USA realizing the sensitivity of global reach the then President of USA Franklin D. Roosevelt introduced the ‘Good Neighbor Policy’ to maintain diplomatic relationship with Latin America in order to recover the US perception which was shadowed otherwise by Monroe Doctrine.

Similarly, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin signed an agreement at Black Sea resort of Yalta in 1941 considered to be a milestone of US diplomacy which was mainly targeted towards Russia to have check and balance with Japan in post second world war period. Significance of the agreement was itself the presence of three most prominent leaders of the world. Though the result remained contentious in the years to come, the conference ended with collective agreement on democratic government in the region.

In yet another milestone and the perhaps the most significance step of USA in global policy, the USA in June 28<sup>th</sup> 1945 ratified the United Nation Charter. The US, Soviet Union, Britain and China collectively began to outline plans for the post world war forum at Dumbarton, Oaks in Washington in late 1944 with the spirit of wartime cooperation ultimately envisioning the creation of United nation (UN). Fifty nation came together in June 1945 at San Francisco with commitment to the principles of peace, international cooperation and human rights and signed and drafted the drawn UN charter. The US senate also promptly ratified the UN charter unlike the League of Nation.

The vitality of the US role in the foundation of the UN is signified by its designation as one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council and eventually setting its headquarter in New York.

However, on the other side the tensions of world war two rose and USA entered the war after Japanese air attacks on the US naval base Pearl Harbor, Hawaii,



on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941. Nevertheless, the focal point of Second World War was the USA bombing in Japan. The ruthless drop of nuclear war head for the only incident in the history of mankind took place while the USA fired two mean nuclear war heads 'little boy' and 'fat man' in Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the devastating effect not only killing thousands of people but also paralyzing the whole surrounding environment. The drop of the two mean warheads was a defining point for USA and the globe to have the future perspective in the global scenario.

The undisputed superpower of the world in the post second world war period not only was engaged in the global diplomacy but also had their homework done internally as of July 26<sup>th</sup> 1947 US promulgated the National Security Act which was passed by the congress in 1947, which for the first time created a unified Department of Defense. The act also established the joint chiefs of staffs linking the heads of Army, Navy and Air-Force in one forum. The National Security Council (NSC), an advisory body to the President; and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) all would become central components of the US defense policy facilitating during the Cold War era and beyond. The act reflected on the one hand the growth of the US military sector as a result of participation in the Second World War, and on the other a perceived need for continued maintenance of this sector within the context of increasing suspicion of the Soviet Union.

The USA in the post second world war period was determined to lead the world as the superpower as it started to form a sound base internally by enacting the National Security Act as well done a significant job in order to influence the global activities by forming the UN, which would help the US not only created a strong mindset amongst the American public but also would also help it pioneer the sector of global cooperation significantly.

The United States destiny was revolved around various zones of the world like the political future of the world-system (through the United Nations) and the principles of legitimatization of policy-making that is liberal understanding and multilateralism) were decided in San Francisco. Lastly, in Bretton Woods, the future mechanisms of international monetary system- International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) or World Bank) and the underpinnings to reproduce the capitalist world-economy (Arrighi, 1999, p.231). Broadly speaking, the determination of future organization of the post-war world-system was structured and centered on the United States. It started to gain its name as a new workshop of the world. The post-war economic power was clearly for the U.S. in converting itself into political, military and cultural hegemony.

## **5.2 The Cold War Era**

In the aftermath of 2<sup>nd</sup> world war USA was unanimously the superpower of the world with only the then USSR being its real competitor. Apart from USSR other European giants either joined the league of USA's ally or stayed neutral without interfering any of the USA's moves. On the other hand, USA was able to pacify Japan by mutually signing peace accord which prevented Japan from developing nuclear warheads compelling the most technologically sound and powerful country out of the race of superpowers. This state of rest lasted for few years as the tensions between USSR and USA has taken a new turn in the world resulting to cold war.

Hence, the Cold War order developed a new type of relationship between the two nuclear superpowers, USA and USSR. There was constellation of institutions that appeared in response and had world transforming consequences during this period. Cold war played a dominant role in the rise of USA in terms of nuclear power head and military intelligence. Even though the two powers did not fight or used weapons

against each other, it was fought through development of Nuclear Arms race, proxy wars, ideological influence and propaganda war which prompted both of them into a nuclear arm race turning them more and more powerful than rest of the world.

The Cold War had changed international system in different ways and the rivalry between two powers quickly spread to the rest of the world. The scenario divided the world into two major blocks, the East and the West block controlled by the USSR and USA respectively clearly reflecting the will of achieving the superpower status and create hegemony in the international system. Thus, USA sensed the need of gaining global confidence and invested heavily to rebuild the world. It unleashed the Marshall Plan to help rebuild Europe by providing a whopping 13 billion dollars within the period of 1947 to 1953 in the wake of controlling damage of their image in the global scenario which was developed after the Japan nuclear bombing. It was also to cover up the shortage of dollar and to build a triangular pattern of trade relations between Western Europe, the U.S. and semi-peripheral and peripheral regions of the world (Rostow, 1997, p.207). Through Marshall Plan the U.S. allocated massive funds and transferred enormous amounts of capital in order to manipulate a European economy in American interests. The USA wanted to prove that they are the global ally and are constructor rather than destroyer. The American endeavors at the time, as observers state, was to provide assistance to rebuild Europe which was destroyed during the second world war on one hand and on the other hand it was targeted towards influencing global people to follow democratic norms as the USA which otherwise was likely to be hijacked by the raising communism which was then starting to gain popularity worldwide. Sniffing the intentions of USA, the then USSR refused to receive any grant from USA. The USSR a pioneer in communism practice opposed the USA grant as it felt was more directed towards brainwashing

Europe against communism, which in their view was more justified practice for the welfare of general public. USA in order to mitigate the possible damage, it formed NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), a union of the countries coming together for military, politics and economy. Countries worldwide feared the USSR more, though was a bit less powerful than the USA during the period because the earlier seemed more and more ambitious as was more into the nuclear program and had diverted insane amount of cash to compete with USA in regard to the nuclear power head, navy and space development programs.

The cold war became visible and reached its top notch during (1948-53). During this period the Soviets unsuccessfully blockaded the Western-held sectors of West Berlin (1948–49). The Berlin blockade and open Russian support of North Koreans and Chinese Communists in their attempt to occupy South Korea compelled proxy war between the USA and USSR.

Tension of cold war however saw respite during 1953 to 1957 though the scenario did not last long, when Eisenhower won the presidential election of 1952 against Truman declaring that he had a ‘mandate for change’. Although he claimed that his foreign policy was different from Truman’s, there was little that was new. As Truman, Eisenhower was militantly anti-Communist. Eisenhower’s ‘New Look’ defense policy aimed to save money by depending on the nuclear deterrent, but the distrust and ideological opposition between the two blocs continued. The status of the city of Berlin remained a major stumbling block for the two superpowers because of the composition of Berlin Wall or say the “iron curtain” closed the last open point between East and West. However, the western bloc lead by the USA with more democratic and liberal ideology were deemed more technologically and economically well off than its eastern counterparts lead by then USSR making USA the leader in

the race of superpower leaving the USSR far behind, though the latter also boosted an array of nuclear warhead arsenal. In addition, the tension surrounding Cuba culminated in a trial of strength played out between John F. Kennedy and Nikita S. Khrushchev in October 1962 over the stationing of Soviet nuclear missiles on the island resulting Cuban missile crisis. The proximity of Cuban land with the USA was a threatening factor but the USA's instant blocked of Cuba and USA's diplomatic endeavors were able to neutralize the situation proving the mettle of the titan once again. Direct clash between the two superpowers was halted once again prompting a short lived truce in the Cold War. The major toll took place in 1963 with the initiation of red telephone where the two powers could have a diplomatic conversation on limiting the arm race.

Nevertheless, Vietnam war was the most noticed case in 1960s and 1970s as a part of cold war confrontation in which America tried to contain spread of communism. But direct confrontation between these two superpowers was not occurred. The US justified its military intervention in Vietnam to contain spillover effect of spreading communism in the countries surrounding Vietnam. The major priority was to halt the spread of communism ideology in the South -East Asia. Though the Americans failed miserably in the Vietnam war in terms of huge spending which backfired among general public in USA who criticized the US government over killing a score of people and violating the basic human, children and women rights in the process and spending heavily in Vietnam, just to demonstrate the ideological supremacy, the tendency however spread a sort of fear in rest of the world with the message that the USA can cross any level to satisfy its self-image. Therefore, though USA struggled heavily in the guerilla war fare in Vietnam forcing them in the

verge of defeat it proved that the USA had a far reach capacity to carryout warfare for a decade as far as Asia.

Side by side the Americans were able to develop an era of American alliances which even today has a huge impact in almost all parts of the globe. USA facilitated other friendly regions in the world to form their own alliance such as NATO, Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in the Middle East and (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) SEATO in South East Asia, the RIO pact and so on. In 1951, the United States government signed a peace treaty with Japan as they believed that it was necessary to have Japan as an ally to halt the spread of communism in Asia. Thus, cold war not only encouraged the USA to develop nuclear warhead but it also rose the urgency to the concept of alliance building and encourage democratic values which till now is the major goodwill ideology of USA.

Likewise, USA was also able to limit the further development of nuclear warheads, which in fact was the only front where there was intense competition between the two giants, USA and USSR. The 1970s the Cold War tensions once again was in the lighter side as both the giants agreed to practice the bilateral agreement in the strict terms of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) resulted to SALT one and two agreements of 1972 and 1979, respectively, where the two powers set boundaries on using ballistic missile and its capability of carrying nuclear warheads.

But again the cold war tension took a U turn and intensified in early 1980s as the two superpowers continued their massive arms buildup and competed for influence in the third world undermining the bilateral agreements of the recent past. The United States didn't back out and put their effort to increase the areas of influence in most part of the world. Through the Camp David Agreements of 17

September 1978, which forced Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula, US President Jimmy Carter was able to bring Egypt back into the American fold.

In 1980, Americans voted a new president Ronald Reagan to strengthen the image of the United States in the world. The most popular president of USA till date in terms of foreign affairs. Reagan's Presidency was also marked by a rise in military spending and a significant increase in the budget for the armed forces. The East and West block tensions fueled, however the then US. President Reagan was successful to propound the 'Star Wars' programme. In addition, Reagan revealed the 'Strategic Defense Initiative' (SDI) – a space shield that would detect and destroy the ballistic weapons within a seconds they were launched. This turned out to be a huge milestone in the arm race with technology enabling USA to take a huge leap forward in terms of its recognition as the only superpower of the world. This US project, observers believed, indirectly triggered the financial and economic crisis of USSR forcing it to the brink of failed state. Feeling the sensitivity of the economic and political vulnerability of USSR after Mikhail Gorbachev assumed power in 1985, Moscow decided to put an end to the reckless arms race that was ruining the country. Gorbachev wished to develop closer relations with the West and to resume talks with the United States. Both the powers signed the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which resulted in the destruction of nuclear and conventional missiles with ranges between 500 and 5500 km, within three years. This treaty was the first real nuclear disarmament agreement which marked the end of the arms race between the two superpowers.

Further, the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 put an end to the Cold War and its divisions which started in the post Second World War period. After that to the misery of USSR communism ideology and for the rise to the top of the democratic ideology,

there was the fall of Communist bloc as the USSR was totally dismantled during 1989/90 resulting the end of a bipolar world era built around the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, ultimately leaving USA to be the ultimate superpower of the world. The organizations like Warsaw Pact and Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON) established to repel the western influence were dissolved in 1991.

Hence, though USA was assumed to be undisputed superpower nation of the world in the second world war period the USSR was giving USA run for their money as the later was equally well economically and had modern technologies and also was able to invest huge sum of money in the nuclear development programs. Though the two superpowers never ever collided full fledgy in any sort of combats, had long standing rivalry in the production of nuclear war heads creating the antagonist cold war situation between the two nation until the dismantle of USSR in 1990. USA now remained the sole superpower. However, it was the Cold War, which legitimated strongly the US hegemony (Keohane, 1982, p.70).

### **5.3 POST 1990- Unipolar World**

The US enjoyed the status of largest economy and the dominant military power and assumed the responsibility to manage the new world order in the post-cold war era. The US even did not chart any new chapter in United States' foreign policy after the demolition of USSR. Rather, they simply adapted the country's successful strategy to a new age of unipolarity. The USA emerged with clear military, economic and diplomatic primacy and assumed the top spot among dominant Western coalition. USA was also able to strike on its long-standing goal of maintaining favorable balances of power both globally and within key regions. With the motive of advancing the democracy practices by promoting democratic institutions throughout



the globe. The goal of creating a robust liberal economy in the non-communist developed countries promoting deeper integration while spreading market institutions in developing and underdeveloped countries were prioritized in order to contain and ultimately defeat the Soviet Union.

However, after the fall of USSR, the post-cold war strategy focused on preserving US international primacy, deepening and extending the liberal order, and suppressing any dangers that threatened to disrupt this nonthreatening international environment (Brands, 2016).

Now America being the sole superpower, the existence of new world order persisted. In the words of Winston Churchill, a world order in which “the principles of justice and fair play protect the weak against the strong.” A world where the United Nations, is composed to fulfill the historic vision of its founders.

USA more emphasized upon developing mutual understanding with individual countries around the world regarding their prospective development potential and democratic norms with the consent of the concerned country for the overall development of human race and serving their motto of hegemony, which in long run be largely concerned towards influencing global development.

Every post–Cold War administration emphasized maintaining the United States globe connecting military posture as the hard-power backbone of the unipolar international order. Similarly, every administration preserved its soft power ability and even extended the United States alliances and security commitments to influence in key regions by providing the confidant to other nations that would help withstand and increase the liberal world order. With respect to the global economy, administration continued to pursue international economic integration through institutionalization of liberal economic practices, liberalization of global currency and

capital flows, and creation of free trade agreements like North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) post-cold war and progressed in establishing the Trans-Pacific Partnership. US faced serious threat by aggressive actors that hindered the smooth and effective functioning of the international system. From Iraq during Saddam Hussein's regime to present North Korea, US applied economic, diplomatic and military means to contain them. Post-cold war, U.S. foreign policy goal prioritized promotion of democracy. US applied Marshall Plan in 1940s whereas it used the policy to encourage for liberal political reforms during Carter and Reagan administrations. From 1990s onward the US strategy was built upon the foundations since early 20<sup>th</sup> century with the series of WWI, WWII and Cold war. However, these events did result in advancing the number of electoral democracy increasing from 76 in 1990 to 120 in 2000s.

As the twenty-first century dawned the United States experienced the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Eighteen months later American force led an ad hoc coalition in an invasion of Iraq to depose Saddam Hussein and his Baathist regime. These events, combined with the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, spurred a new round of discussion about the American role in the global order in the name of fight against terrorism. According to Charles Kupchan, a rise in challenge to America 's leadership from Europe and eventually Asia, as American domestic pressure compounded pressure from other states' for an international balancing of power (Kupchan, 2002).

The tragic event of September 11 with devastating effects surely had an adverse impact upon the otherwise strong mindset of American public. People suddenly realized that there was no need of nuclear bomb to kill a score of people, people with the evil head can carry out evil plans to kill humans. There was a sudden up burst of terrorist activities round the globe with its root in middle east and south

Asia during the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century. The whole world began to feel the ill effects of terrorist activities round the globe with USA in the middle of the most devastating terrorist attack the world has ever felt. Then there was a need of global unification to fight against the terrorism, and the USA assumed the frontline role in its wake to wipe out terrorist activities worldwide by initiating the war against terror. Once again the global alliances intensified and came together for the war against terrorism, which in fact was scattered globally. The world began to experience the new wind of change, the European countries intensified their war against terrorism and busted many bases around Europe which was used as a training ground by various terrorist outfits in the name of 'jihad' the holy war. The operation against also intensified in the middle east considered to be the base for such terrorist outfits with hefty economic support. The middle east country also began to uproot and bust many terrorist outfits from the region as the pressure from the superpower of the world intensified in the name of war against terrorism. The then secretary of USA Colin Powell visited every corner of globe to seek and comply every country in their wake to fight of terrorism. The world seemed to have unified like never before. Observers believed that India even notched positive sign over USA's intention of monitoring Line of Control (LOC) between India and Pakistan, considered to be a major breeding ground of jihadism, which otherwise India was and is always against the any third party involvement in the issue. World observed a radical wind of change in Pakistan too following the visit of Powell in the region, fundamentalist in Pakistan were seen clean shaved just to convey their state support to the war against terrorism firmly led by the global Superpower USA. It will not be otherwise to state that though USA had to suffer massive setback immediately after 9/11, it came forward with more intent to

curb down terrorism from the world and prompted the global unification like never before proving its mettle as the superpower of the world.

Thus, the whole scenario is concerned with the American diplomatic and muscle power, where the USA always had the firm grip since the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Moreover, America also had its high stake in the field of soft power. There was this huge popularity of living the American dreams, the Coca-Cola trend, New York being considered as the workshop for art, culture, industries, finances where all the world would want to live in the USA. (Wallerstein, 1996a: 216- 217). The tendencies reflect the USA's proficiency in diplomatic front. The U.S. government introducing the various programs such as military trainings, enhancing public diplomacy through educational institutions providing aids and scholarships programs lead in fostering shared American and democratic values in major parts of the globe. U.S. public diplomacy programs throughout the world, including educational and cultural exchange activities, continue to facilitate an understanding of American values and culture, the sharing of ideas, and access to many intellectual areas in which Americans are world leaders.

However, side by side USA also increased its military reach to every corner of the globe. During 2009 the United States had more than 1,000,000 soldiers in 30 countries, was a member of four regional defense alliances and an active participant in a fifth. It has bilateral defense agreement with more than 42 nations, it is still an active member of more than 53 international organizations. It provides military and economic aid to more than 100 nations in the globe. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, (which measures relationship between entrepreneurship and economic development of the country) denoted the US surpassing the other countries as it has had a favorable business environment, established venture capital industry, close

relations between universities and industries, and an open immigration policy (Nye, 2010). All the proven facts and counts proves that as all the successful companies today have had its initiation based and founded in US, like Microsoft, Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon. Moreover, it consists of the culture of innovation and entrepreneurship programs are favorable to America playing a crucial role in constructing and sustaining the global networks that are sources of soft power in today's world (Slaughter 2009).

USA has proven to be a super power because it is the only country which is capable to have a political and a military world leadership in the international system. The USA presented itself as the only power able to be the world “watchdogs” and to ensure the maintaining of peace and democratic norms. Moreover, the USA still possess the largest military arsenal in the world and in history. However, it seems that the four criteria of the superpower matched the American situation at the time: - Military superiority - Economic success - Technological domination - Cultural influence making it the unanimous superpower country of the world.

#### **5.4 Current Scenario**

In the current scenario the world has been dominated in terms of politics, economy, military and world influence by the Western Europe and mainly USA. This influence is often coined as ‘great divergence in the words of Samuel P. Huntington. However, the world dynamics is forced a little inclination in the graph with the rapid rise of China. Due to the tremendous rise of China along with other powers, many scholars have pointed the possibilities of America having a tough rival to the throne of only super power in a decade or so. However, there is rather a mixed view on this topic. China is currently coming neck to neck to the west in terms of its global trade, according to some predictions; it may soon gain its role as the dominant world

influence. Further elaborated by Kroker in his view, the enhanced version of 'Great Divergence' includes The Rise and fall of the West and the Recovery of China as countries like China, India is no longer behind in the increasing trend of trade and economy with the gradual increment of its influencing role in the international arena(Kroker,2006). However, it's too early to predict that USA will have any competitors soon. Moreover, USA will be more concerned and rise its stakes of being superpower if it feels there will be any sort of competition to its throne in anyway. The USA also have a huge advantage as it is largely based upon open society as it welcomes talents and potential people from all over the world to further develop its open society which makes even a large number of Chinese themselves serve to the future society of USA while the Chinese have its own secluded society not that open to the rest of the world.

Since the end of World War II The USA has been the central player in the international system, leading in the creation of new international organizations like the United Nations (UN), North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), The International Monetary fund and The World Bank. American Diplomacy has dominated multilateral agreements on trade, climate, regional security and arms control. If we contrast the defensive strength and expenditure, which is one of the main areas of focus for a superpower, the US has allocated 738 billion dollars as its defense budget for 2020, which is the largest ever. China similarly has put aside 178.6 billion dollars, with a 6.6% increase from 2020. This clearly demonstrates the supreme military might of the US, which has strategically placed itself ready to deploy its troops to any part of the world. In 2017 alone, its special operation services were deployed to 149 countries, which comprise 75% of the total world It has been

steadily increasing, and is an increase of 150% from the Bush administration (Satariano,2020).

When it comes to military power, the friction going on in the South China Sea is undeniable. U.S. accuses China of coercing its allies and partners, militarizing disputed features, and seeking regional hegemony, whereas the United States is considered to be playing the South China Sea card and containing China's rise as a maritime power. One hand, China's capacity and the progress of the navy and air force is particularly impressive and rapidly increasing. On the other hand, the United States is worried about China's rising power and has significantly strengthened its naval and air presence since 2009. In this context, "frequent military- to-military encounters are inevitable" (Hu Bo,2020). Although the People's Liberation Army is already very strong materially, it still has a long way to go to compete against its American counterparts as an advanced power.

China's defense production capacity is increasing significantly but still lacks the scientific and technological competencies and is still far away from being able to develop more innovative and sophisticated weapons in comparison to USA (Cheung, 2014, p.277).

USA is the world's richest and most productive economy till date, but China is rapidly increasing its economic size and is able to secure the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest economy in the entire world. The China's share of global GDP has grown dramatically as its Nominal GDP is 14.14 trillion dollars and GDP on the basis of Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) is 27.31 trillion dollars. However, USA is still on the top notch with the nominal GDP of 21.44 trillion dollars but has shrunk in terms of PPP 21.44 trillion dollars in 2019. Many scholars have augmented that America has become a debtor

nation, borrowing large sums of money from China as credit for continued economic and budgetary expansion (Shirayev and Gibson ,2009).

But in the economic globalized world considering GDP as the sole yardstick of economic super power is not convincing at all. So many products are not made in a single country but are constructed through global supply chains. Yes, there is huge presence of China in the global market but we cannot rely on national accounts to meaningfully assess power in the global political economy (Starrs, 2013). Starrs further notes that U.S. investors own more than 46 percent of all publicly listed shares of the top 500 corporations in the world, thus signifies how globalized American economic power has become. Given the significance of these disturbances in GDP, in the diverge countries like USA and China, there would ideally be an alternative measure that could be used for making more appropriate comparisons. UN has introduced “inclusive wealth” which measures and represents economists’ most systematic effort to date to create a rigorous and transparent measure of a state’s stock of wealth. Inclusive wealth includes a country’s assets in three core areas: manufactured capital, human capital and natural capital (UNEP, 2014, p.15.).

However, China is doing a lot to surpass the role of Superpower from USA. Made in China 2025, strategic plan, for increasing technological progress and import substitution, if successful, will transfer global market leadership to China from the U.S. in many high technology markets such as semiconductors, computer hardware and software, networking and communications, automobiles, and genetic engineering. Chinese government support of firms pursuing industrial policy goals includes low-cost capital, state-directed investment funds for foreign technology, and state-directed cyber theft and industrial espionage. A critical underpinning of BRI is the Digital Silk Road which creates a proprietary technology infrastructure to support economic



development and power projection. Through a network of submarine and cross-border fiber optic cables, coupled with remote sensing, communications, and other satellite services, the digital component of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is seeking to enable everything from e-commerce to artificial intelligence (AI), satellites and smart cities as part of a closed system controlled by China. “China Standards 2035” project, aims to control the global principles setting organizations such as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), the United Nations International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the International Electro Technical Commission (IEC) with huge participation to ensure that its information technology (IT) services and telecommunications standards are flourished worldwide.

As Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, told the Senate Armed Services Committee during his confirmation hearing, “artificial intelligence will be the changing character of warfare and the country that is able to own it first will dominate the world system for many, many years” (Rich, 2019).

Furthermore, as the U.K. government’s recent decision to not ban Huawei from participating in its 5G network illustrates, many of America’s closest traditional allies have thus far been far more reticent to publicly challenge China where economic issues are concerned, even when they bleed into national security (Satariano,2020). The benefits of this industrial policy are most notable in the national champion firms which are protected from domestic competition, building large economies of scale before competing globally. Successful examples in global markets include Huawei (which has overtaken Cisco, Nokia, and Ericsson as the worldwide leader in telecommunications equipment), Baidu (which has the mandate to become the worldwide leader in AI) and Alibaba (which ties Amazon as the global leader in e-commerce). In addition, China is establishing its robust base in the defense sector as

well. As of now, China includes seven domestic firms exceeding \$5 billion in annual revenues, each of them ranking in the top 20 defense companies globally (Mehta, 2018).

However, in order for USA to remain in a dominant position it should consist of a strategy that leads to cooperation with China. As the global scenario is different and the world is leading towards multipolarity, so the strategy used in the cold war might backfire the US position at present. Technology, and especially commercial technology will almost certainly play a more important role in boosting economic competition which will eventually lead to another requisite of superpower that is military might. Tomorrow's battle space will involve asymmetric technologies designed to neutralize U.S. advantages such as anti-satellite weapons, small drones and improvised explosive devices as well as new competition in the cyber and space domains.

However, USA is also doing its part to remain the most powerful in the world. The Pentagon has initiated the Defense Innovation Unit to fasten the adoption of commercial technology to increase and broaden the base of military suppliers.

US is still the supreme power in technological and innovative areas than China but more areas of power are evolving in international system. China is about to be in number one position in 5 G technology, e-commerce, generation of largest quantity of clean wind and solar power, high speed rail, etc. China is also surpassing US in the deployment of small drones and hypersonic, quantum communications in the database of genetic engineering in the world. China has been challenging towards U.S. technological leads in Artificial Intelligence, genetic engineering, quantum computing and quantum sensors. China is loud and clear and trying way harder to catch up and surpass the U.S. 5G in telecommunications and quantum technology are two instances

that shows the dramatic change in commercial economy and military capacity (Brown, Chewning and Singh, 2020).

Though there is fluctuation of the American economy and it is not steady like it was few decades ago it still holds the top position in the technological sector. Whereas, China is in a fundamentally different competitive position. Although China has higher capability to produce goods in labor intensive sectors, it is still not in competition in the field that requires high technologies. China's competitiveness within GVCs (global value chains) however, allows to generate only limited value added compared to other countries engaging in more technology and knowledge intensive activities (OECD, P.76–77). These data prove the power of global economy and technology USA possess in the current scenario.

Similarly, next major indicator apart from military and economy is in what ways the state can spread its influence around the globe. There is an ongoing race to boost soft power diplomacy of USA and China. Both the countries use different tools of soft power. The U.S. government public diplomacy and international military training programs aim in large part to cultivate shared democratic values among the professional and leadership classes of foreign countries. The U.S. public and military diplomacy programs has been very useful to build a bunch of professionals in the field of academics, policy-making, military leaders. Similarly, China also has made strides in the area of state diplomacy by being more open to pragmatic foreign policies and upgrading its trade and security interest through bilateral and multilateral cooperation post 1990.

Focusing on the current scenario, circumstantial differences may occur in the name of super power. After all the arguments USA is in decline relatively but not absolutely. Fareed Zakaria points out the United States will have to accept the

changing global scenario as the concept of Superpower is fading and it is less or more due to the rise of the rest. "The rest that are rising are embracing markets, democratic government (of some form or another) and greater openness and transparency. It might be a world in which the United States takes up less space, but it is one in which American ideas and ideals are overwhelmingly dominant" (Zakaria,2008).

Though some view that the USA is in decline others have reserve viewpoint upon the issue, they rather called it the global upturn. The other countries are also gaining the economic, technological, and military development momentum like which the USA had almost a century ago. The USA had advanced in the rapid pace for almost a century and rest of the world been catching the likely momentum now means USA has already created a huge gap with rest of the world and is unlikely to be caught up in any particular front any time soon.

Though it is observed that country like China is rapidly climbing to the top with its extended trade and military power, USA still is far ahead out of reach in the context of superpower throne. It is for sure that USA will and also been initiating its capabilities to hold onto its throne as other countries rush towards it. So in the current context it is almost impossible to imagine that any other country can strip USA out of its superpower status in any foreseen future. Stating that the rapidly changing dynamics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century following the development of Information Technology also cannot be ruled out.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **COMPARISON IN TERMS OF RISE AND FALL**

Observing British case in the late 19th century, and the US in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, it holds many similarities and differences with the British decline. Then most significantly, British decline in global stake and economy facilitates to make a consistent comparison with that of US decline. Though there is a huge difference in the past century and the current one, determinants like military, economy is constant in both and upcoming centuries.

One of the major comparisons of UK and USA can be done in terms of economy as it is the most powerful yardstick to define a superpower. Most significantly, in terms of commercial hegemony which refers to a situation in which any one country has supremacy in trading and transportation of goods and services where both the countries possessed and made huge advantage of it (Shannon, 1989, p.120).

So in this regard, the initial kind to compare the British and American trajectories is the changing patterns of trading capability of both superpowers. The most important aspect while doing this is the technological advancement and its impacts over up and down turn of their economies. Technological advancement is pivot and it creates most fundamental dimension of the superpower position, its productivity superiority flourishes just after the successful implementation of those innovations in its economy. This advancement leads the superpower nation to pursue assertive economic policies in the global market which can be observed in the case of UK and USA.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the British began to lose its unchallenged status in the trade and economy. Similar to the case of the United States has been challenged in the

world economy hierarchy by competent economies like China, starting from the 2008/9. The British and American systems and the crises they experienced in the sphere of structural characteristics display some parallel points. Not only the downswing of economies of UK and US but vast improvement in the technological capability and enhancing innovation of other states are also the crucial reasons of decline of hegemonic players of the global system.

The British economic growth rate declined significantly than earlier decades. Early from 1870s, in terms of GDP, the British economy was 1.9 % per annum, and it decreased in 1880s by 1.7 % per annum and dramatically starting from 1899, it fell behind all of its competitors into 0.5 % per annum. Britain can be labeled as 'late industrializer' in the so called Second Industrial Revolution based on chemicals, electricity and steel (Pollard, 1994, p.65). Similarly, in the case of America, 1990s experienced the beginning of more important and assertive challenger to the U.S. in the world trade and economy. With the impressive growth of Chinese economy, the U.S. has had experienced upheaval in terms of productivity, costs of production and shares in the global market. Therefore, the assumed causes of American decline are not completely different than the British case. The comparative disappearance of technological advantages, the loss of market domination and the remarkable growth rates catching up by the challenger nations have brought a relative downfall on the American economic in the capitalist world-economy. The gap between the American and Chinese GDPs was approximately four times in 1960 the US: \$ 2000 billion and China: \$ 585 billion, which somehow denoted China is trying a lot to be on the top.

Another term that helps to compare Britain and USA is the situation of multinational firms. From almost last two centuries, the joint stock played a centric role in world economy (Ikeda, 1996, p.39). American and German joint stock

companies seriously challenged British joint-stock companies during the period of British decline. American hegemony has similarity with that of British in this case as well. To be precise, not only American dominance in the world-system but also the spectacular growth ratios of capitalist economy has been rested upon Transnational Corporations (TNCs). Increment in activities like research & development (R&D), production, transportation, distribution and financing resulted in growth in production (Ikeda, 1996, p.39). As the natural outcome of being the leading economy in the post-World War II, the the great majority of TNCs was possessed by the United States. 1967/73 is the year from which non-American companies surpassed American TNCs by enhancing their production and economic capacity.

One common characteristics of both UK and US as superpower is they both focused on promoting the idea of free trade. The difference between them is UK's free trade is in its domestic level of colonies whereas US has promoted this idea in global level through multilateral institutions like General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (Mjoset, 1990, p.31). Thus, reduction in advantageous positions of both actors was direct outcome of erosion of cost competitiveness and lack of efforts to adapt the new production structures. In consequence, both Britain and the U.S. pursued a lesser economic development in comparison with the post war era specifically in the US case.

As the dominance of the state declines in the world system, it is normal to see the increasing tension and politico/military competition. If the superpower begins to lose its economic dominance, it will often use military might to enforce its agenda, thus a declining hegemony often inflicts military tension and conflict. This actually further weakens the hegemon economically and in the long term, only contributes to its demise as a superpower. In this case also, there are significant similarities between

the British and US hegemonic downturns. During and after the Cold War period, the deployment of American military forces resembles to fleet bases and garrisons held by Britain in the 19th century. The American strategy of restructuring countries of middle east is similar with the Britain's imperialist strategy known as civilizing mission. Therefore, the occupation of Iraq by the American forces has not only damaged its uncontested military status but also given rise to legitimacy crisis of US world power. It is assumed that the American failure to cope with military and economic problems may serve the further expansion of alternative power resources such as China.

Many scholars argue that, the British were superpower where, the power was determined by the strength of particular country's military and economic power and number of colonies. While it has taken a huge paradigm shift in the current context of globalized world where different other determining facts like economic, global trade, GDP, technology, global alliance, stake in global organizations, among others, has to be taken into account alongside the military power while determining the overall strength and global influence inherited by the particular country concern.

We can consider that while UK was stated the superpower of the world, the yardstick then was only the military power and the competitors were also limited. Only a handful of European countries like France, Spain, Portugal, and Germany were in the race led by the Englishmen. Even during the modern era, during the post second world war period while the USA was considered to be the superpower it had only one serious competitor that is USSR. Both had opposite ideology and the both were immensely powerful.

Though the USA still considered the superpower it has rivalry in different fronts with different competitors in the current context. Now many observers believe



that the Peoples Republic of China which is advancing in the extra speed towards enhancing its economy and spreading the global trade can be a real danger for USA superpower status as it is likely to overtake in many folds in the wake of global trade and can massive injuries to the US economy by the means of their trading partners. Many even believe given the current speed china may prompt USA into deep debt within next two decades and owe trillions of dollars to USA prompting off their throne of being undisputed superpower.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

Here in this paper tries to finger out the superpower country the world has seen throughout the modern history and in the current era. It was England who conquered the globe and established itself as undisputed superpower of the world till the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century as was able to colonize the better parts of the world. During the period England faced tough challenge from other European countries like Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, among others, who were also trying to prove their respective stake in the global colonization. Holland which in fact was able to attain the technological and human development long before the rest of the world. Similarly, Spain, Portugal and France were also able to colonize a wide range of land on earth as they were excellent on exploring the new lands on earth carrying out lengthy sea voyage with better technological advancement. All of them especially four of the European giants England, France, Portugal and Spain were able to colonize most part of North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia with England leading from the front. England leaped in front with better military display as well able to establish trade throughout the world whose better part of the profit served the revenue of England government. Doing so England began to exploit the immense natural resources present in the world to serve to the British economy. England not only dug into the natural resources but also began to exploit the human resources with the heinous act like slavery. England which entered India to establish its business in the name of East India Company not only gradually colonized India and began exploiting the natural resources it later began treating Indians like a low grade humans and levied hefty tax upon the Indians to serve the British economy. Likewise, the British government began exploiting the natural and human resources globally and was able to build the

huge economy as well develop military strength in many folds as compared to other powerful nations establishing itself as a superpower of the world during better part of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Though England got hold of better parts of the world and had their trading influence in almost all parts of the world their tendencies got backfired as the countries and people around the world felt the ill effects of the suppression and unequal distribution of wealth, hence the world, towards the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century felt the need of democracy and end of colonization for overall development especially human and social development.

Subsequently with the unfolding of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the people around the world got more and more conscious of the social and economic development with the realization of the need to end the colonization for the overall development of humankind the countries around the globe gradually shooed away the English empire and began attaining the democratic politics for their economic, infrastructure, social as well overall development. Hence the British influence over the world began fading away in the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century and its monopoly was almost over before the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century forcing England out of its superpower nature totally. In one hand England's popularity began degrading since the start of 20<sup>th</sup> century on the other hand other countries were emerging as a dominant figure in the global state none as prominent as the collective states from north America, the United States of America (USA).

The technological advance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century also brought many other players in the race like Japan, Germany, France, USA, Russia alongside England. The first world war, however, saw the power of USA as was a detrimental factor for the end of the war making USA a new superpower on the global stage. USA began rapidly

moving forward in the form of developing military power and later investing heavily upon developing nuclear war heads alongside other countries like Japan, Russia, Germany, France and other European countries. However, USA was ahead of others in terms of their resounding massive economy where they were able to pour a hefty amount in the nuclear programs. On the other hand, USA was able to build an array of allies globally in terms of diplomatic relationship, trade expansion and cooperation programs, which in fact had the edge over the British style of assuming superpower mostly by suppression and exploitation.

Assuming the superpower by USA took a massive paradigm shift as compared to the British model as the USA did it in the very diplomatic fashion developing the global participation by envisioning and forming global bodies like United Nations (UN), NATO and more recently World Trade Organization (WTO), G7 etc. among others. The USA was methodical upon assuming the superpower in the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the world experienced technological advancement so as the human and social development also took a giant leap and people were more concerned about the overall eco development.

The flexibility of USA was unmatched as it continues to assume the superpower till date though it had to face fierce completion all the way in the form of Germany and Japan in the pre second war period and in the form of USSR as a tough rival in the cold war era in the post second world war period till 1990.

The USA not only was able to proceed with resounding external affairs but was also able to build a well-defined liberal democratic political establishment internally which kept the citizen of USA as supreme as defined by constitution and the security of the American people be the core duty of establishment. At the same time the USA was also able to develop the open society welcoming the people from

whole over the world to have their contribution towards democracy and development during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Though the USA time and again face many challenges in the form of deadly terrorist outfits with the turn of the millennium, the USA is able to develop more and more cooperation globally and emerge more and more powerful with every challenge announcing it to be the supreme superpower the world has ever experienced. The diplomat superpower which more rely upon the global cooperation and global organization, global trade and economic growth, the superpower of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Currently the observers hold that China is the major rival to the throne of superpower of USA as it is stepping forward with unbelievable economic growth with resounding GDP. Scholars assume that in the given condition China can overtake USA within 2 decades. But the calculation seems just the theoretical assumption if we consider the facts and figures of current scenario. It is obvious in the current speed USA is likely to have trade deficit with China, but that does not mean China will overpower USA as for China is doing more than 50 percent of its global business with USA and if USA intend to cut business with the Dragon nation both the countries will sustain loss. As China will lose the profit from its business with USA while USA also will have loss as it will have to replace the acquisition from somewhere else or will have to produce itself which is likely to cost more as China has been gaining in the global market hugely due to substantially low cost of production.

So it will not be wise to assume that China will overpower USA in coming decade just because it is doing very well in trade and economics. But we also cannot rule out the Chinese development of military hardware and missile. China is stepping forward in massive way is for sure. We can say the Dragon is 2<sup>nd</sup> most powerful nation in the world currently.

But China is way behind as compared to USA in terms of hold over global organizations, global cooperation and in terms of global allies. China though second falls far behind the superpower USA in terms of defense spending, currently USA has allocated approximately \$ 20 billion for defense as compared to the China's little over \$ 3 billion.

So looking at all the facts and figures and the approach to the superpower throne we can still state that the USA is undisputed superpower of the world which is unlikely to be challenged in any foreseen future. As we also need to assume that how intense be the rivalry to the superpower no concerned front will instigate anything like biological warfare that can of catastrophic effect to the entire humanity and the existence of earth itself.

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